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[From Heath's Book of Beauty, for 1845.]

The Anniversary.

BY ALARIC A. WATTS.

Twenty chequered years have past,—
Summer suns and wintry weather,—
Since our lot in concert cast,
First we climbed the hill together.

And the world before us lay
In its brightest colors drest,
As we took our joyous way
To select our place of rest.

Fortune's smiles, we could not boast;
Fame—we had not dreamt of Fame!
Friendship—e'en when needed most
We had only known—by name.

So, despising trappings rich,
We decked our brows with humbler things,
And in friendship's empty niche
Love installed—without his wings!

There, though twenty years have fled,
Chequered o'er by good and ill,
He lifts aloft his beaming head,
The same, young household idol still.

[From the National Intelligencer.]

THE OREGON QUESTION.

Debate in the Senate.

The following resolutions, offered by Mr. Cass, came up for consideration on Monday, the 15th instant:

RESOLVED, That the Committee on Military Affairs be instructed to inquire into the condition of the national fortifications and of their armaments; and whether defensive works are necessary; and into the condition and quantity of the military supplies; and into the state and means possessed by the Government for the defence of the country.

RESOLVED, That the Committee on the Militia be instructed to enquire into the present condition of that great branch of the public service, and into the state of the militia law; and that they be further instructed to report such changes in the existing system as will give more experience and efficiency to that arm of defence, and will place it in the best condition for protecting the country, should it be exposed to foreign invasion.

RESOLVED, That the Committee on Naval Affairs be instructed to enquire into the condition of the Navy of the United States, and into the quantity and condition of supplies now on hand, and whether an increase of them is not necessary to the efficient operation of the navy, and to its preservation and augmentation; and, generally, into its capacity for defending our coast and commerce, and for any service the exigencies of the country may probably require.

Mr. Cass rose and addressed the Senate. Is it possible, said he, to read the Message of the President of the United States to Congress, and to witness the indications of public opinion which are disclosed about us, without being aware that a crisis rapidly approaches; that the present state of the intercourse between this country and Great Britain demands serious consideration, and may demand a cordial co-operation in action on the part of Congress and the whole nation? The President has told us that the negotiations have arrived at, if not a close, at all events, a position which is about tantamount to a close. The claims of the two nations he finds utterly irreconcilable, and a relinquishment of claims to some extent on the part of one or both countries, or the intervention of a mediating power, seem now to be the only alternatives which can avert that most disastrous event, a state of war.

This Government has already declined to submit the matter to arbitration: it was a course which might with propriety be adopted by independent nations, under equal circumstances, but unfortunately, in our controversy with England, those equal circumstances did not exist. It was obvious that an umpire would have to be taken from the associated monarchies of Europe, and we might well hesitate to leave the decision in such hands. It would be thought, be better to hold fast our rights, than, by submitting them to a doubtful arbitration, to risk their loss.

War was a great calamity, and should, if possible be avoided; but there were calamities more to be dreaded than war, and among those calamities was national dishonor. He did not rise for the purpose of discussing our right to Oregon; that was a subject which would come up in its proper place, and at a proper time. He was aware that a great diversity of opinion existed as to the extent of our claims, and, for himself, he would embrace this opportunity of expressing his cordial and entire adherence to the views expressed by the President in his message to Congress in relation to this matter.

It must be pretty evident to all who examine the subject that the pretensions of the two nations are utterly irreconcilable.

The most liberal as yet made by England fell far below our most moderate claim; and under these circumstances, said Mr. C., what are we to do? Shall we recede? No, sir; as to receding, it is a thing not to be thought of for a moment. It is a thing which I allude to only to denounce it; and in this denunciation I am sure that I shall be joined by every true hearted American. Nothing is to be gained by pusillanimity.

He who would be content to attain a present temporary advantage at the expense of future dishonor and disgrace, but sows the whirlwind and reaps the storm. I will, continued Mr. C., here repeat a maxim which cannot be too deeply impressed upon our minds, viz: that it is better to fight for the first inch than for acres afterwards; better to fight for the door-sill than the hearth-stone; to maintain our national character unblemished is of greater consequence than the acquisition of wealth or extended possessions; it is this which possesses a moral influence in the hour of danger which is beyond all price. I repeat it, upon this question we cannot recede. Our destiny is onward. You might as well attempt to chain the waves on the Pacific as to arrest the progress of this nation. There is a tide of emigration now finding its way—making for itself a channel through the barriers of the Rocky Mountains, which must inundate every portion of the vast territory lying beyond them. A vigorous and hardy population are spreading themselves abroad in the region, and they demand the protection of this Government. Shall they not have it? Shall they not have the benefit of our laws and institutions extended to them?

Only last week memorials were laid upon your table asking for your protection; and do you think that, if their application is disregarded, they will long continue to seek your favor or conciliate your regard? No sir, the possessions they have acquired they will hold by the bayonet. They will not tamely sit still and await your tardy movements. The great principles of mutual protection and allegiance, if not adhered to by you in favor of that adventurous people, a portion of your own citizens, you dishonor them, and they become a prey to foreign diplomatic chicanery. What is it that inspires the hearts of those who have found a home in that distant region, if not the prospect of enjoying the blessings of civil and religious liberty under the fostering care of this Government? It is impossible that this state of things should continue; for it seems to me utterly impossible that a community having the same interests and occupying the same territory can hold a divided allegiance, and be governed by two distinct and separate sovereignties. Are their claims upon this government to be disregarded by us altogether? Have they no rights to be enforced, and wrongs to be redressed? How is either the one or the other to be done amid conflicting authorities constituted within the same limits? Possessory titles to lands might be held to be good in favor of the party last getting possession. How can justice be obtained by going into a court composed of every party from whom redress or restriction is sought? England herself is invulnerable; the arrows of justice cannot even reach her heel. Touch but her rights in the minutest particular and her national sympathies and prejudices are aroused, and she is prepared to resist to the utmost. Shall we be less tenacious of our rights? We are warned by the infirmities of human nature to trust our cause to none but ourselves. If then we cannot, with a due regard to national honor, retrace our steps, and as England has placed herself in our path, what course is before us? I have no hesitation in saying, if England adheres to her last proposition, and refuses to relinquish it, it is tantamount to a declaration of war. I hope, nay, I say rather, I wish that England would awaken to a sense of her injustice, and yield where she can yield honorably. But will she do so? It is safest to believe she will not; and this dictate of caution is fortified by the whole tenor of her conduct. When did she ever relinquish a hold that she had once gained? The course taken by the two great leaders of her Administration may be regarded as a pretty sure index of what may be expected for her policy.

[Mr. Cass here quoted from the London Morning Chronicle a portion of a debate which occurred in the House of Commons, April 5, 1845, in relation to the proposed annexation of Texas to the United States.]

Here (said Mr. C.) is the leader of the great Whig party in the British House of Commons denouncing the annexation of Texas to this country because it tends to territorial aggrandizement; and all this cant about British moderation and philanthropy is believed in by the credulous and the infatuated; but let them not suppose it is believed by us. The timely and wholesome rebuke administered to Mexico might, with equal propriety, be administered to England! Such a colossal power as England has built up the world has never seen. Her fortifications gird the earth and her ships cover the sea. I have procured from the Librarian a few statistics of England's power and greatness.—She holds sway over 153,000,000 of people. A little narrow island on the western coast of Europe gives laws to one-fifth of the whole human race. She holds sovereignty over three millions eight hundred and twelve thousand square miles, one-eighth of the whole globe. And in the whole course of her acquisitions, from the subjugation of Ireland downwards, it has always been the force of arms. There has never been an instance, so far as I remember, where an independent people submitted themselves willingly to her domination or control; never an instance where a people, united with her out of reverence or regard to the institutions. I have no pleasure in national criminalization and recrimination, but we cannot, if we would, shut our eyes to these truths. They have made a lasting impression on my mind, and I am but little disposed to yield to pretensions urged as she urges them. And she charges that we, too, are ambitious. Why, we have made three accessions, and they were all of them, coterminous regions with our own. And now, when in the process of the accomplishment of a junction consummated by the voluntary act of a free people, that nation, so celebrated for its self-assumed moderation, interposes in words, if not by deeds, and betrays upon us the utmost villification.

While I would sacredly regard the rights of other nations, I would extend the benefit of our own laws and institutions over all who claim our protection; for I have no fear that an extension of territory will weaken our Government. It has a life preserving principle within itself; in the control which the whole body of the people have over the Government—a better security than fleets and armies. And if this Administration would crown its labors and in all it has yet done it has acted with equal ability and success—let it secure the peaceful annexation of Oregon and California, and it will have secured to itself the lasting gratitude of the country.

[Mr. Cass again referred to some passages in the English newspapers, expressive of the feelings entertained by the leading men of that nation towards the United States.] Under these imposing circumstances, (continued Mr. C.) we may well ask of the watchmen, "What of the night?" What are we to do? I take for granted that we will give notice of the termination of joint occupancy, according to the recommendation of the President, (for I cannot suppose that the people of Oregon are to be left without protection), and if we do there must be a war. And it will be no trifling war, but a war of extermination. The danger cannot be averted by indifference. It is better to look a difficulty in the face, by making the adequate preparations, showing to England and the world the spectacle of an undivided people. One war has already found us unprepared, and reflect for a moment what that condition of things cost the country in blood and treasure. Our preparations should be vigorous, prompt, efficient.—The President has discharged his duty ably and fearlessly; let us now discharge ours. It is my firm conviction, and I do not hesitate thus publicly to express it, that the surest if not the only means of avoiding a war, is to be united in the determination to carry it on, if it does come, with all the energies God has given us.—Our country is extensive and populous; we have a spacious frontier exposed, unfortified and ungarrisoned, with a very diminutive navy, which ought, especially the steam portion of it, to be put in a better condition with all practicable speed. These preparations require time; but the patriotism of the American people is always awake, and prepared in a single instant to repel aggression and to resent injury—ready to demonstrate to the whole world that republicans are jealous of their interests, and determined to support and maintain them.

[Mr. Cass was replied to by Mr. Mangum, who was followed by Mr. Allen and Mr. Archer; but we cannot command room for the remarks of these gentlemen.]

TUESDAY, DEC. 16, 1845.

The Senate having resumed the unfinished business of yesterday, being the consideration of the resolutions offered by Mr. Cass.

Mr. Niles addressed the Senate at considerable length in favor of the adoption of the resolutions. He saw nothing objectionable in the resolutions themselves. They were mere resolutions for inquiry, and such as Senators were in the habit of moving almost every day of the session; but he deprecated the discursive range which the debate had taken. He believed it was calculated to produce an injurious effect both in this country and abroad. He thought that the plain and obvious course which had been marked out by the President in his message was the true and proper one for Congress to pursue, and he could see no reason to apprehend that any other than an amicable termination of the controversy would be the result.

Mr. Crittenden next addressed the Senate. He remarked that, in the resolu-

tions themselves, he perceived nothing objectionable, and he was quite ready to vote for appropriations which might be deemed necessary at any time to place the country in a state of complete defence, and to provide against the possible contingency of a war. The remarks however, which were made by the honorable Senator from Michigan, the mover of these resolutions, gave to them a peculiar significance, a peculiar degree of consequence and importance, under the circumstances in which they were placed. Those remarks, in fact, according to his understanding, conveyed an assurance, and from a very high authority, too, that war might now be looked upon as almost inevitable. They were, as far as the honorable Senator could make them so, a declaration of war. Remarks of that character were calculated deeply to affect the interests of the people, and seriously to disturb the business of the country. He felt assured, therefore, that the Senator had not made them unadvisedly and without proper deliberation. As for this Government receding from the proposition she had already made, the Senator had said that he mentioned it only for the purpose of denouncing it. Our position, then, was fixed; and unless Great Britain thought proper to recede, there must be war. When did Great Britain ever recede? But more than this: they were informed that the President, in his message, had recommended that notice should be given of the termination of joint occupancy; and the Senator had proceeded to say that, if the notice were given, war would be inevitable. They were, indeed then, according to the authority of the honorable Senator, standing on the very verge of war. And if the whole Senate were the same opinion, instead of adopting a resolution of inquiry which they were now called on to adopt, they would at once make every effort at preparation and putting on all their armor without any delay.

Mr. Cass desired to explain. He did not say that war was inevitable, but that if England, at the expiration of the year, persisted in the practical assertion of her claim to the Territory of Oregon, it would lead to war. He had stated yesterday, and he would repeat it now, that he believed England would persist in that claim.

Mr. Crittenden. Under these imposing circumstances, we may well ask of the watchman, what of the night? What are we to do? I take it for granted that we shall give notice of the termination of the joint occupancy; and, if we do, the Senator tells us there must be war.

Mr. Cass. But I added, as I now do, if England persists, as I believe she will, in practically asserting her claim.

Mr. Crittenden. Then the Senator wishes to be understood as speaking qualifiedly. I would be very glad to hear an explanation from the honorable Senator by which public anxiety might be relieved.

Mr. Cass said he could give no such explanation. His opinion, if the Senator desired to hear it, was, that we are almost on the verge of war; for he believed that England would persist in her claim.

Mr. Crittenden said that these momentous announcements were calculated, he thought, to create very great apprehensions in the public mind, particularly when coupled with other remarks of the same nature made by the honorable Senator. After, for instance, informing the Senate that England was not in the habit of receding from "any pretension which she once sets up, though we cannot settle the differences in any other way, he yet repudiates the idea of arbitration.—Well, then what was the conclusion at which the honorable Senator arrived?—It was that war was inevitable.

Mr. Cass observed that he did not wish to convey any other idea than he very much feared war would ensue, because he believed that England would persist in her pretensions.

Mr. Crittenden now understood the Senator to say that he believed England would persist in asserting her claim to the whole of the Oregon territory.

Mr. Cass. That is it.

Mr. Crittenden. Well, after the speech of the Senator of yesterday, that is something of a retraction.

Mr. Cass. I do not retract a single word. I will repeat what I said. [Mr. C. here took a copy of the report of his speech, as prepared by himself for the Union, and read the passage referred to.]

Mr. Crittenden. Now I am totally at a loss. Does the gentleman mean that if we give the notice, and he thinks we ought to give it, war will necessarily follow?

Mr. Cass. If, at the expiration of the year, England persists in her claim; I cannot say what she will do, but I believe she will persist.

Mr. Crittenden. The Senator then at length, instead of announcing an inevitable inference, makes his inference contingent upon the happening of other events—upon the occurrence of other circumstances. His conclusion, to be complete, will require various other facts: such as that Great Britain will, at the end of the year, take hostile possession of the whole territory.

It might be very fairly inferred that such a course on the part of Great Britain would lead to a war; and if the Senator desired to make out a case somewhat stronger, let him suppose that Great Britain should land her forces and take possession of the city of Charleston, or Norfolk, or Baltimore. In short, the meaning of the Senator, after all, was that war would inevitably take place, provided the grounds for war were hereafter supplied. He had at first feared that the announcement made by the Senator would have the effect to create a false alarm; and this effect he thought the more likely to be produced by reason of the high character and standing of the Senator, not from his personal and private character and standing alone, but from the intimate and confidential relations which he was supposed to bear to the present Chief Magistrate of the nation. It would be very naturally supposed that declarations of so momentous a character would not be made without a knowledge of the sentiments entertained by the Administration. Taking all these considerations together he was somewhat under the impression that the authority given so apparently in earnest must be set down as an evidence that there was to be war.

Sir, (continued Mr. Crittenden.) I do not myself believe, speaking with all due deference for the distinguished Senator, that we are to have a war. I have never been able to realize to my mind that a war could possibly grow up between two such nations as the United States and Great Britain, out of such a cause. Is it possible that we cannot settle the boundary of a distinct strip of territory, of no great value either, without a war? Cannot the diplomacy of the country settle a question of this sort, without imbruing the hands of the two nations in blood? What is their wisdom worth—what is their diplomacy worth—if this be the case? Sir, it ought to be settled. There is no question of insulted honor, no question of national character involved. This is but a question regarding some portion of a distant frozen barren territory, that has been in dispute for thirty or forty years. I have more confidence in the wisdom, humanity, and intelligence of the two Governments, than to suppose it possible that out of such a cause war can arise. And while I say this, I will add that I perfectly agree with the sentiments expressed by the Senator from North Carolina, and the Senator from Virginia, yesterday, that if war should come, I believe we shall see the whole Union rally round the national standard, united as a single man. Before the actual occurrence of war we may battle among ourselves, but when it comes there is no neutral ground to stand upon. But who is there that desires a war? None I trust. All say it is to be deprecated and avoided, and I trust, that every thing will be done on our part that honor and policy permits to be done to avoid it.

But we are now called upon to give notice of the termination of the joint occupancy, and we are told that, connected with other circumstances war is to be the consequence of that notice. Will it be so? I think it ought not, and will not, unless we commit a very egregious blunder. But if, as the Senator says, we are in the path which leads to war, let us march slowly and firmly upon it. Let us be firm, self possessed, and slow.—We shall not be less formidable to our enemies while advancing thus, than if we pursue the path as if reckless of all consequences, whosoever it may lead us. Let us, then, if we are to give the notice, and I think we cannot well avoid it, instead of giving the precise notice indicated, let us give notice to take effect two years hence; it will not the less indicate our firmness and our determination. Let us not act like a spiteful landlord giving notice to a tenant, and limiting our tenant to the shortest possible time, but give time for reflection and negotiation. We ought not to be hasty or careless of giving insult to any people, much less to those whom by character and by lineage we resemble so nearly.—The question of settlement of mere matters of interest may be difficult enough, but an insult is much more difficult of settlement between two high spirited nations. Let us, then, travel on with a firm and steady step, cautiously, boldly, and at the same time manifesting a willingness to secure an amicable adjustment of difficulties in preference to war.

Mr. Webster said he did not propose to offer any opposition whatever to the passage of the resolutions, though he could not perceive that there was any very great necessity for their adoption. It did not appear to him that they charged the committee with any especial duty. Inquiry into the matters here suggested was the ordinary duty of the committee, and he did not think there were any extraordinary circumstances existing which rendered it necessary on this occasion to instruct them by a resolution of the Senate, or to stimulate them in the performance of an established duty. Nevertheless, he regretted the introduction of these resolutions, combined as they were with the remarks which the Senator from Michigan had thought proper to address to the Senate, because he agreed with the

Senator from Kentucky that their introduction in that manner appeared to give something to them of significance which would create unnecessary alarm. Every member of the Senate knew, and every man of intelligence knew, that unnecessary alarm and apprehension about the preservation of the public peace was a great evil. It disturbed the business of the country; it disturbed the calculations of men; it deranged the pursuits of life, and even, to a great extent, changed the circumstances of the whole business of the country. This truth will be felt more especially by every gentleman acquainted or connected with the sea board. They all knew what an immense amount of property was afloat upon the ocean, carried there by our citizens in the prosecution of their maritime pursuits. They all knew that a rumor of war, or the breath of a rumor of war, would affect the value of that property. They all knew what effect it would have upon insurances. They all knew what immense amount of property on shore would be affected by the agitation of public opinion upon an intimation of the disturbance of the pacific relations existing between this country and foreign States.

Sir, (said Mr. W.) there are two ways in either of which a Government may proceed—and when I have stated them I think it will be obvious to every one which is the wisest. We may if we choose create alarm and apprehension. We may, if we are wise, cause no unnecessary alarm, but make quiet, thorough, just, politic, statesmanlike provisions for the future.

Mr. President, I am entirely of the opinion of the Senator from Kentucky. I have not been able to bring myself to believe that war will grow out of this matter, certainly not immediately; and I think I cannot be mistaken when I say that the recommendations which the Chief Magistrate has made to Congress will not lead to any such result. I think it impossible to mistake the meaning of the President. He does not expect war. Looking at the state of things around us, and at what is stated by the Executive, I cannot believe that he apprehends any danger.

Sir, I shall abstain cautiously from offering any remark upon that portion of the message which refers to the negotiation. I abstain with equal care from any remark upon a correspondence which has been published. I do not wish to say whether it does appear from that correspondence that negotiation is so completely and entirely at an end, that no amicable disposition of the question may be looked for hereafter from a diplomatic source. It is enough for me, in order to accomplish all the purposes of these few remarks, to say, that while I am incapable of bringing myself to the belief that the president apprehends any immediate danger of war I may be allowed to suppose, or to imagine, that he, the President, may entertain an opinion similar to that which has been expressed this morning by the Senator from Connecticut. He may possibly look for propositions to come from the other side, having communicated the ultimatum of this Government. Whether it be in this view or upon other grounds that the expectation is entertained, it is enough for me to deprecate any false alarm that may arise to disturb the tranquility of the country.

The President may feel, as I am bound to suppose he does feel, the full weight of the responsibility which attaches to him in relation to whatever interests the peace of the country. I am bound to suppose he understands the position in which he is placed, and that he judges wisely as to the extent to which he should go in submitting propositions to Congress. Therefore, I entirely concur in the opinion which has been expressed, that he cannot regard the present position of affairs as leading to any immediate danger of war.

Acting upon these conclusions, (said Mr. W.) and entertaining these views, all the regret I feel at the introduction of these resolutions is, as I have said, that, accompanied with the remarks which fell from the honorable Senator when he called them up, they might have a tendency to create unnecessary alarm. He trusted that every member of the community would perceive that it was necessary to suppress all alarm; and, as far as he was concerned, if gentlemen thought that the time has come for enlarging the defenses of the country, for augmenting the army and the navy, he was ready to co-operate with them.

Mr. W. concluded by expressing the hope that, while they did every thing that was necessary for the preservation of the honor and the interests of the country, they would abstain from creating any alarm in the public mind.

Mr. Sevier said it struck him with some surprise that any inquiry could never be brought up in that Chamber on the subject of Oregon, but they were told to beware lest they provoke danger elsewhere; to be cautious how they tread with the business pursuits of the country. It appeared they were expected to proceed by stealth in the performance of their duty, lest they should create a panic in the country. His friend from Michigan had been catechised with great severity to